

WASHINGTON, DC – Congressman Robert C. "Bobby" Scott (D-VA) issued the following statement upon learning of U.S. Attorney General Holder's decision to have the Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) standards apply to Department of Homeland Security (DHS) immigration detention facilities as well as other federal, state and local prisons and jails:

"I am pleased to see the decision by the Attorney General to apply the PREA standards to immigration detention facilities that are under the authority of the DHS. This action is consistent with the intent of PREA because these facilities were under the direct authority of the Department of Justice as PREA was being developed, so they were understood to be covered by it. Immigration enforcement operations, including detention facilities, were subsequently placed under DHS.

"I am also pleased to see that the Department is issuing the general standards for implementation of PREA and that through an executive memorandum issued today, President Obama is directing that all other federal executive departments and agencies apply the PREA standards to all facilities they administer, adult and juvenile, whether administered by the government or by a private organization on behalf of the government. The process of developing and issuing the standards has taken much longer than we had hoped it would take when we passed PREA on a strong, bi-partisan vote in both chambers of Congress in 2003. So I am relieved that we are finally prepared to enforce meaningful reforms in the nation's prisons, jails and detention facilities to better ensure that the scourge of rape and sexual abuse in these facilities is prevented."

#